

2s. 6d.

Athenian News:

Syn. 4. 71. 1

OR,

Dunton's Oracle.

In Three Thousand several POSTS.

To which is added,

The Casuistical-Post, or Athenian Mercury, Resolving the most nice and curious Questions propos'd by the Ingenious of either Sex.



VOL. I.

CONTAINING,

I. Dunton's Post. II. The Mob-Post. III. The Whipping-Post. IV. The Lying-Post.
V. The Sibil-Post. VI. The Coffee-house-Post. VII. The Love-Post. VIII. The Duelling-Post. IX. The Singing-Post. X. The Tailing Post. XI. The Bed-Post. XII. The Mad-Post. XIII. The Surprizing-Post. XIV. The Post properly so call'd. XV. The Athenian-Post. XVI. The Drunken-Post. XVII. The Ignorant-Post. XVIII. The Miser's Post. XIX. The Rimming-Post. XX. Apollo's Post. XXI. The Wedding-Post. XXII. The Dipping Post. XXIII. The Casuistical-Post.

To which several Posts is prefix'd *A General Title, Preface and Index*, with an honourable Challenge to the Celebrated TATLER, to write either *pro* or *con* upon all disputable Points, with a Specimen of the first Challenge, in a Hebrew Question, and other Problems concerning the Divine Prescience. The Challenges (if accepted) to be continu'd Weekly by the whole Athenian Society, being Twelve Gentlemen, all Masters in their several Faculties, and whose Characters are distinctly given in this Title Sheet, which is to be seen in all Coffee-houses and Booksellers Shops, and is given gratis at the Sword in New street, near Fetter-lane, and by John Morphew near Stationers Hall; where is to be had the First Volume of Dunton's Oracle compleat, or any single Number of the Second Volume, but not of the First, all the single Numbers of the First Volume being now gather'd into Sets.

This Athenian News (or Three Thousand Posts) will be continu'd every Tuesday and Saturday, to furnish out *A universal Entertainment*; and Six Volumes (which contain just Ninety Sheets) will be a fit Size for binding.

For all the Athenians and Strangers which were there, spent their Time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing. Acts xvii. 21.

Now my Days are swifter than a Post; they flee away, they see no good. Job ix. 25.
So the Posts passed from City to City, through the Countrey of Ephraim and Manasseb, even unto Zebulun.
2 Chron. xxx. 10.

Enter'd into the Hall-Book of the Company of Stationers, pursuant to Act of Parliament.

L O N D O N,

Printed by T. Darrack, in Peterborough-Court in Little-Britain, and Sold by J. Morphew near Stationers Hall, and at most Booksellers Shops in Town and Country. Price 2s. 6d. stich'd up in blue Paper.

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THE DEDICATION TO THE Sour, prejudic'd, censorious, and *Athenian* READER.

YOU must not wonder (my Masters) at this Stile of Address, for the World has been so bitten already with— your courteous, wise, charitable, and understanding Reader—that I am as resolute in the Case as the famous *Dryden*, never to have any more to do with them, for Readers are not to be caught now a-days as we catch *Trouts*, with tickling, nor to be quieted, as you do *Children*, with *Sugar-plumbs*, for all our Readers set up for *Athenians*, *Wits* and *Criticks*, and if a poor Author chance to be taken tripping, tho' but in a false Number, or a broken Period, or a stolen Sentence, they have no more Mercy on him than a *Dog* of a *Pancake*; and to say the Truth, they are only a more barbarous Sort of *Canibal*, for the eating of a *Man's Flesh* is nothing to the worrying of his Reputation, and at the best, a complemental Preface to the Reader is but an *Indian Praver* to the Devil; a Parcel of good Words, for Fear he should hurt us: And yet methinks betwixt the Fate of writing Books and the Fatigue of reading them, 'tis e'en a measuring Cast which Side has the worst on't, for 'tis but teasing one another by Turns, and the one revengereth the Quarrel of the other; nay, I'm very positive that a common *Strum-pet* en't half so impudent as a common *Scribler*; for you shall have many a *Carted Whore* that will make ye some Conscience yet of turning up in the Market place, whereas the common *Scribler*, without so much as waiting for the Question, prostitutes himself upon every Bulk to all Co-*ers*; nay, your most splendid Dedications to the *Illustri*, the *Right Honourable*, the *Right Worshipful*, if they be not a direct Confederacy betwixt the Two Parties concern'd, (as they usually are) they are yet at the fairest but a more fashionable Way of begging; and therefore my *Athenian Reader*, if courteous I honour and respect you, but if sour, prejudic'd, and censorious, you may go about your Business, for I neither love nor fear you; but if the Matter of *Dunton's Oracle* prove as pleasant as the POSTS are new, I doubt not thy Approbation: However, 'tis one Comfort, thou canst not say I am the first Fool in Print, nor (as I think) shall be the last. 'Tis true, 'tis a very humble Employment to drudge Weekly in a Penny Paper, but I think I may scribble with more Honour than some others, for as my Estate (under all Misfortunes) sets me above writing for Bread, so I ne'er cou'd be yet tempted to prostitute my Pen for Money, I having always refus'd to write (as Mr. *D*—, Mr.

C—, Mr. *P*—, and others can testify) where the Project wan't entirely my own; and therefore as I write meerly to please and divert my self, 'tis (almost) indifferent to me whether my Reader prove either *sour* or *courteous* to what I publish.

But now to my Text, for I shou'd be a hard-hearted Brute of a Father indeed if I cou'd be so cruel as to send my Three Thousand Posts (or *Athenian Brats*) into the wide World without speaking so much as one good for 'em.

And here 'twill be necessary first to say something of my POSTS in General, and then in a decent Manner to slip into a distinct Account of my Weekly Drudgery.

Then Sir *Momus*, know in the first Place you must not expect my *Athenian News* (or Three Thousand Posts) all at a Lump, for *Elixirs* and *Quintessences* are to be dispens'd by Drops; so that if you have it by Retail, fresh and fresh every *Tuesday* and *Saturday*, (for those were the Days on which I formerly publish'd my *Athenian Mercury*) there will be the less Danger of surfeiting; besides that, it must needs be more acceptable in Penny Chops, for a Bit off the Spit abroad relishes better than a whole Joint of Meat at home.

The several Posts contain'd in this Work are, 1. *Dunton's Post*. 2. *The Mob-Post*. 3. *The Whipping-Post*. 4. *The Lying-Post*. 5. *The Sibil-Post*. 6. *The Coffee-house-Post*. 7. *The Love-Post*. 8. *The Duelling-Post*. 9. *The Singing-Post*. 10. *The Tatling-Post*. 11. *The Bed-Post*. 12. *The Mad-Post*. 13. *The Surprizing-Post*. 14. *The Post* properly so call'd. 15. *The Athenian-Post*. 16. *The Drunken-Post*. 17. *The Ignorant Post*. 18. *The Miser's Post*. 19. *The Rimming-Post*. 20. *Apollo's Post*. 21. *The Wedding-Post*. 22. *The Dipping-Post*; and so on to Three Thousand Posts (Thirty of which compleat a Volume).

To each of these Posts is added, *The Casuistical-Post*, or *Athenian Mercury*, resolving the most nice and curious Questions propos'd by the Ingenious of either Sex. The whole publish'd in Three Thousand Posts, to gratify the *Lovers of Novelty*, and will be so manag'd as to be made a universal Entertainment: And that every Post may present the Reader with *Athenian News*, the curious of either Sex are desir'd to send such Pieces in Prose or Verse, (but more especially remarkable Accidents, humorous Poems and nice Questions) as may properly be inserted in either of these Three Thousand Posts, directing them for *Dunton's Oracle*, at the *Sword in New*.

The DEDICATION.

New-street near Fetter-lane, not forgetting to discharge Postage.

Reader, having given this general Account of Dunton's Three Thousand Posts, I'll suppose thou art now come into honest John Morphem's Ware-house, to enquire of him if he have any thing that is new. Were Solomon at thy Elbow he would tell thee *there is nothing new under the Sun*; but it is common with Men, as well as Children, to long for a *New Nothing*, and for that Reason I call this Weekly Paper *Athenian News*, (or Dunton's Oracle) *Athenianism* being entirely my own Project, and my self honour'd so far as to be chosen and continu'd a Member of the Athenian Society, for the whole Time the *Athenian Oracle* was publish'd.

So that Reader, if thou art upon the Hunt after *Novelties*, I suppose honest Morphem will recommend to thee *Dunton's Oracle*. If he does, take his Advice and buy it, for the *Athenians* of Old *spent their Time in nothing else, but to bear or to tell some new thing*; and I shall never presume to publish any thing under the Celebrated Name of *Athens* but what is *new*, either as to the Subject, or Method in handling; and remember, (for I am not afraid to threaten a prejudic'd Reader) what a nice and curious Treasure of Wit and Novelty the World had formerly been depriv'd of had it not given a Timely Encouragement to my *Athenian Oracle*; and therefore I resolve to spare no Pains or Charge in furnishing out my *Athenian News*, in Hopes 'twill meet with the like Success, for 'tis writ by a large Society of ingenious Gentlemen, (as you'll hear anon) and sent abroad by Three Thousand Posts; and if a Weekly Paper that has so much *Athenianism* to recommend it, does not meet with a kind Reception, I shall begin to think the World is weary of *Novelties*: But if the famous TATLER meerly beg'd it's Way, by being given at first to the *London Coffee-houses*, (a Meanness I shall never submit to) and yet had lik'd to have been drop'd after the publishing of many Numbers, 'tis evident the *Athenian Itch* is as general as ever it was, and then I can't doubt but in Time my *Athenian News* will spread as far as my *Athenian Oracle*, or even the famous TATLER, for he once talk'd of writing his own Elegy, and was nearer dying than John Partridge, whose living Funeral he so ingeniously celebrated; not that I'm so vain to compare *Dunton's Oracle* with the *Lucubrations* of Esq; Eickerstaff; yet if Variety and Novelty be any Recommendation of a Weekly Paper, I may modestly say, a more universal Entertainment was never yet publish'd than *Dunton's Oracle* will be in a few Years, of which this First Volume is a short Tast, as you'll find if you'll consult the Table of the several Posts, Questions, Novelties, Poems, and Characters contain'd in it; and for the Second, Third, Fourth, and succeeding Volumes, they are to comprehend, or envelope with in their spacious Circumference (for Three Thousand Posts might furnish News for Three Thousand Years) no less than all the visible and intellectual World.— I might enlarge in my general Account of this *new Undertaking*, but indeed I cannot better or fuller describe *Dunton's Oracle*, than by telling you in Two Words 'tis every thing; for as the Lives and Actions of great Princes contain one Way or other the greatest Part of the History of the Times and Ages they live in, so the Reader will find in my Three Thousand Posts (but more especially in that call'd the *Railor*, or *Traveling Post*) the whole Description of, I scorn to say one Country, one Age, or one World, but of all the

habitable and uninhabitable Creation; *Terra incognita* describ'd as plain as *Ireland* in *Petty's Survey*, every Foot, Pearch and Inch on't, Virtue and Vice, Wit and Folly, all the Humours, Religions, Customs, Whims and Connundrums of Mankind, Directions how to bear himself in every POST and Stage of Life, from the Sucking Bottle and Clouts to the last hot Suppings and burying in Woolen. i. e. from the Infant to the Funeral-Post.

You that after the vile Customs of the Age behave not your selves as you ought towards the Spouses of your Youth, who render not what they ought to have, all that Respect, Tenderness and Complaisance— *look ye what here is!* Look and learn, see the Pattern of lasting Affection, and the very Warming-pan of Love and Duty, in the *Lost Rib restor'd*, or the *Conjugal-Post*, as it proves the Relation between Man and Wife is not dissolv'd by Death, but abides for ever; a Notion wholly new.

Then for Discretion to avoid Dangers, and all that; but 'twere endless to run thro' all *Dunton's Three Thousand Posts*, let it suffice Sir *Knaw-post*, thou wilt find in my Weekly Posts little less than an exact Pattern of Heroick Virtue in all Circumstances, and on all Occasions; *Prentice*, *Master*, *Traveller*, *Courtier*, *Sailor*, in a Shop, out on't and in again, *Author*, *Bookseller*, *Printer*, and what not? in all Offices and Places, from *Scavenger* up to *High-Constable*, and so onwards; and if Three Thousand such *Trading*, *Rhyming*, *Wooing*, and *Casuistical-Posts*, &c. been't a Treasure, let the World shew a better.

As for the pretty little Virtues of Comity and Urbanity, these Posts furnish you to a Miracle, for have you a Mind to divert either your self or Friend with the most pleasant and agreeable Entertainment, a Man's Jaws must be made of Iron and fasten'd as close to one another as if 'twere done with the Pins of a Shop Window. If the *Love-Post*, *Sibil-Post*, *Tailing-Post*, *Miser's Post*, and *Guild-ball-Post*, don't now and then wrench 'em asunder and discover not only the Teeth in his Head, but the very Grin of his Soul, and such an intellectual *Te-ke* as will force the very Heart to be— it self for Joy, and the Blood flow out at such an immoderate Rate as 'twou'd be almost impossible to hold fast any thing else; tho' o'th' other Side he'll meet with Posts (such as the *Whipping-Post*, *Mob-Post*, *Ignorant-Post*, *Mad-Post* and *Sick-Post*) that tho' they may'nt spoil, will yet temper his Mirth, and as the Egyptians had, (and they were cunning old Fellows) be a Death's Head in the Midst of his Dainties.

Thus have I given an Account in general of my *Athenian News*, or Three Thousand Posts; I now proceed to a more particular Explanation of my Weekly Project. And here I should first acquaint you that I call my *Athenian News* a *universal Entertainment*, as I have chosen the *Universe* for their Circuit, with all that it contains; but I resolve more particularly to discourse of whatever shall occur new and curious in all Faculties, Arts, or Sciences; for which End I have establish'd an *Athenian Post* at the *Hague*, *Leiden*, *Utrecht*, *Frankfort*, *Brussels*, and *Amsterdam*, that I may have early Notice of all that the *Learned* or *Curious* in other Parts sh all from Time to Time judge worthy of publick View.

And here take Notice, that under the Title of Three Thousand Posts there is included *History*, both Civil and Ecclesiastical, *Philosophy* in all its Parts, the *Mathematicks*, with all their surprizing Inventions and Effects, *Physick* with its Train

and wonderful Cures, and *Philology* with all its known Criticisms; and as to *Theology*, scarce one Post of my Three Thousand but what shall be garnish'd with it, except such merry and humorous Posts whose only Design is to divert and amuse; so that the Reader will meet in *Dunton's Oracle A compendious View of universal Learning*, and with a very small Expence either of Money, Time, or Pains.

And this I think is as particular an Account as I need give of my Three Thousand Posts; and as to my *Athenian Mercury* that is to be added to each Post, that it may in Time be made a *universal Directory* for any that labour under any Scruples whatever, I shall (with the Assistance I am promis'd) not only answer all nice and curious Questions in *Divinity, History, Philosophy, Love, Poetry, &c.* but shall also insert several nice, secret, and uncommon Cases that were lately (and may hereafter be) sent to me: And that I may carry on my *Athenian Project* in such a refin'd Manner as may gratify the curious, but more especially my ingenious Querists, I desire all my Querists to keep the following Order, as to the Subject Matter of those Questions they shall hereafter send to *Dunton's Oracle*; Viz.

I. That they send no Questions that have already been answer'd in my old *Athenian Oracles*, for no such shall be answer'd here.

II. That they send no obscene Questions, for I shall answer none that have any Tendency that Way.

III. That they send no Riddles, or Equivocations, for they are of no Use to the Publick.

IV. That they send nothing, the Answer of which may be a Scandal to the Government, or an Abuse to particular Persons.

V. That no Querist send above One or Two Questions at the most, at one Time, for then they will be the sooner at Liberty to send again, and perhaps something more curious than what they sent at first.

VI. and Lastly, That they send nothing that may be destructive to the Principles of Virtue and sound Knowledge, and then let my Querists be as nice and curious as they please.

And if any Gentleman will so far contribute towards the completing my *Question-Project*, as to send me what rare Questions or Cases he has met with, (either in Print or Manuscript) provided he sends nothing but what is nice and curious, (for no common Question shall be inserted in *Dunton's Oracle*) I shan't fail to insert it in this Paper, and be always ready to own the Obligation: And that none of my Querists may be put to the double Charge of buying the same Questions twice, I shall not only answer whatever nice and curious Questions are sent to me, but shall re-answer (in the same Manner I have done in this First Volume of *Dunton's Oracle*) all those valuable Questions that have yet been answer'd by the Interloper, or *British Apollo*; and when I meet with any Questions that require immediate Satisfaction, (if sent to the *Sword in New-street*) they shall never fail of an Answer in my next *Oracle*.

I know the Criticks will here say, *That no Man is able to answer all nice and curious Questions*, and that by Reason of a Seven Years 'Prentiship I must needs be a great Stranger to the *Latin, Greek, and Hebrew Languages*.— To which I answer, 'Tis well known to several Persons now living in *London*, that my *Reverend Father* made me early acquainted with the learned Languages, (which I

wou'd not have mention'd had not the *British Apollo* mis-represented my Education) and that he was my *Tutor* himself thro' a whole Course of *Divinity, Philosophy, Mathematics*; and tho' 'twas my hard Fortune for Twenty Two Years rather to *sell* than to *study* Books, yet I hope for the Ten Years I have made a Retreat from the Noise and Hurry of Trade, I have in some Measure redeem'd that precious Time I had lost in the Pursuit of Trifles, (for to I count all the World when compar'd with Learning) and wherein I was defective the *British Apollo* might have try'd if he durst, for he saw I wore—a brighter Weapon than a Pen—and was so little afraid either of his Learning or Valour, that I gave him both a publick and private Interview. Then how false and ungenerous was he, to tell the World I was a Stranger to the Arts and Sciences? Or suppose I was such an *Ignoramus* as a Self-interested Interloper wou'd represent me, yet for strict Justice—Friendship—Gratitude—*Extempore* Verse—Projecting—and Application to Business—(had my *Oracle* no other Quality to recommend it) I'm so vain to think that all that know me (except *Knaves* or *Fools*) will give me a greater Character than I think it modest to mention in this *Preface*, and this is own'd by my very Enemy the *British Apollo*, in one of his Letters, wherein he says,—*Mr. Dunton, Since you appear to have a projecting Head (all Heats apart) if you think fit to appoint a Time I will meet you, where something perhaps may be concerted for mutual Benefit.*— And since this Letter was writ, the *British Apollo* told my worthy Friend *Mr. William Lutcbwich*, That as the same Time he was writing against me he declar'd to a Friend of his that he had that honourable Opinion of me he would rather join with me in a *Weekly Paper* than with any other *Man in England*.

I might enlarge, but I have said enough already to prove (if either *Variety* or *Novelty* will recommend a *Weekly Paper*) I have hit on a *Post-Project* will please all the World; and to make this *Athenian Treat* yet the more entertaining, I shall often publish an *Occasional Post* that will respect the Time, both past, present and to come.

As to the Time past—I shall furnish out a *Lame-Post*, i. e. review all the miraculous Events from *Adam* down to the present Year; for I don't intend to confine my self altogether to what is modern, but will reserve a Liberty to divert into the Paths of Antiquity, view the Recesses of former Ages, and enquire into the Productions of ancient Learning. Then my *Post* respecting the Time past may properly be call'd *The Lame-Post*, as 'tis a Work of great Curiosity and vast Extent, and (like a *Lame-Post*) will tell nothing for *Athenian News* but what is plain Matter of Fact.

As to the Time present—I shall oblige the Lovers of Novelty with—*The Gentleman's Post*, or the *Mercury Gallant*, consisting chiefly of merry News, *Athenian Jests*, the Quintessence of Plays, (from the first writ to the last acted) humorous Poems, with other Comick Wit, translated from the *Mercury Gallant* and other *Journals*, with large Additions, both in Prose and Verse, writ by A, B, C, D, or the Society of *London Poets*. This *Gentleman's Post* will respect chiefly the present Times, and as 'tis to comprehend the Comick Wit that occurs daily in Conversation, 'twill be the most facetious Post of the Three Thousand, and for that Reason shall be continu'd in *Dunton's Oracle* as often as the *Mercury Gallant* continues to be printed at *Paris*.

The DEDICATION.

As to the Time to come—I won't thank the severest Critick to smile on my *Post-Project*, seeing to gratify my *Athenian* Friends I have settl'd (as you'll hear anon) a Correspondence with several first rate Wits in *London*, *Oxford*, and *Cambridge*, and having contracted a Friendship with learned Gentlemen of all Parties, and in most Countries, I have now done with all *Party Disputes*, and will say *now* nothing in *Dunton's* Three Thousand Posts but what has a direct Tendency to heal our Divisions, or some Way, or other to promote Virtue or Learning, or now and then a little harmless Mirth.

So that *Dunton's Oracle* will contain News that the *London Gazette* gives no Account of, for the most minute Things (that will afford either Mirth or Instruction) shan't 'cape my Quill. So much as the *Country Wakes*, *Welb Ch. Stenings*, and *new Modes*, shall be the Subject of a *Merry-Post*.— The *Popish Saint's* will often want a *Carousing Post*,— The *Post-Pigeon* shall be loaded with *Billets deux*,— The kept Misses will furnish out a *Whoring-Post*, and sometimes a House to be let (or Widow in Mourning) shall divert my Reader with an *Hippocratical Post*.

So that many Things will be met with in *Dunton's Oracle* that cannot be met with elsewhere; and yet the Posts publish'd in this First Volume are but *short Essays*, but by what they are you may judge what will follow: Consider therefore this only as the Design of a Work which Time will better polish.

And therefore (as my *Athenian Society* is now as refin'd and large as I need wish it) I shall for ever exclude that false and ungrateful Run-away who advis'd me to fight the *British Apollo*, led me into the Field of Battle, and then left me to the Mercy of his roaring Cannon, tho' he knew *Athens* was never beaten, (that I always stood by him at a dead Lift) and that 'twas the Character of *John Dunton*, that in the literal War he would either die or conquer, or at least, would never desert the Quill 'till he had mounted Three Thousand Posts.

If you ask me what I mean by Three Thousand Posts,

I answer, by Three Thousand Posts I mean the publishing Three Thousand new and distinct Subjects, 'till the said Subjects are compleated: So that whenever I entitle *Dunton's Oracle* The *Sibyl-Post*, The *Rhyming-Post*, The *Mad-Post*, The *Proverbial-Post* continu'd, I don't mean any *new Post*, but a Continuation of the Subject before treated of, 'till 'tis compleated in the Course of my Weekly *Oracle*: And as by Three Thousand Posts is meant Three Thousand distinct Subjects, so I call every Subject a *new Post*, as every Subject is to contain *Athenian News*, adapted as much to the Design of a Post as the Subject will well bear, of which you have Five nice and curious Instances in— The *Bed-Post*,— The *Mill-Post*,— The *Know-Post*,— The *Sign-Post*,— and in the Post properly so call'd.— All which Posts are written by *Cambridge* and *Oxford* Scholars, and sent to *Dunton's Oracle*, to encourage him by that and other facetious Posts to proceed in the publishing the Three Thousand Posts promis'd in the general Title to this Volume: So that shou'd the *Oracle* call'd— The *Post* continu'd— furnish out Five Hundred distinct Numbers on the same Subject they are all but *One Post*, as they all club to the finishing of it, my Design being that my *Athenian News* shall perfect Three Thousand distinct Posts, which (should I add no more) is enough to convince the Lovers of Nov-

elty how much I have labour'd to gratify their Curiosity; and therefore were not my old Querists very ungrateful *Dunton's Oracle* before this wou'd ha' been dispers'd (as my *Athenian Mercury* formerly was) to every Nook and Corner of the Queen's Dominions, for my *Question-Project* was Six Times re-printed under the Title of *Athenian Mercury*, and Three Times under the Title of *Athenian Oracle*; and as *Dunton's Oracle* is compos'd by more and greater Pens than ever assist'd in the *Athenian Oracle*, 'tis but reasonable to think it should meet with the same, if not a more general Acceptance, in Regard the Three Thousand Posts mix'd with it is a new Project to gratify the Lovers of Novelty, and will in Time render it a universal Entertainment; for that my *Weekly Treat* might please the most nice Palate, 'tis now dress'd

By *One Sibyl*, or a Lady of refin'd Wit and Piety,
Two Members of the old *Athenian Society*,
A humorous Club of *Oxford* Scholars,
Three generous, learned and polite Gentlemen now living in *Cambridge*,
A, B, C, D, or a Society of *London Poets*,
A great Critick in the *Hebrew Language*,
A Reverend, Learned, and Aged Divine, who sends such nice, secret, and uncommon Cases to *Dunton's Oracle* (concealing the Person) as have occur'd to him in a Life of near Fourscore Years,

Besides the many nice and curious Posts that are daily sent to *Dunton's Oracle*, to render it a universal Entertainment.

These several ingenious and learned Gentlemen observing how long the *British Apollo* has been lessening the Credit of my *Question-Project* by his weak and ridiculous Answers, have promis'd to give me their best *Thoughts* upon any Question or Subject; but on this (as they are all Gentlemen of good Estates) I can have no constant Dependance; so that the *labouring Oar* will be always mine: But the Assistance I shall have will be very considerable, for almost every Day one Benefactor or other is sending me new Posts.— The *Pelting-Post*,— The *Kissing-Post*,— The *Horn Post*,— The *Play-house-Post*,— The *Gentleman's Post*,— and the *Reviewing-Post*, have been sent to me by the *Penny Post*, and scarce a Week but the *General-Post* brings me *Athenian News*. I have receiv'd— The *Raffling-Post* from *Tunbridge*,— The *Thinking-Post* from *Leeds*,— The *Lame Post* from *Dover*,— The *F—ring-Post* from *Bedford*,— The *Dancing-Post* from *Chester*,— and several other diverting Posts from *Exeter*, *York*, *Norwich*, and other Places.

So that now I want no Assistance either to furnish out my Three Thousand Posts, or to compleat my *Question-Project*. So much as the *British Apollo*, finding *Dunton's Oracle* does but spread the more by that false and spiteful Character he gave of it, does now generously own, (what I prove in my *Lying-Post*) that *his pretended Satyr was a real Panegyric upon it*.— And that none of his Quarterly Subscribers may doubt this, he has retracted all his Reflections upon *Dunton's Writings*, by leaving them all out in that new Edition he is going to publish of the *British Apollo*, for in a late Letter he sent to me he there says, — *sir, I have sold the Copy of the British Apollo, and have absolutely expung'd those several Reflections on you that were publish'd in it.*— In Prospect of an Accommodation, I am, *sir, Your Friend and Servant,*

M. S M I T H
And

The DEDICATION.

v

And upon our Friendly Interview, since this Letter was sent to me, Mr. Smith assur'd me, (in the Presence of my Friend, Mr. William Lutwick) that what he said to my Prejudice was wholly owing to Misinformation, and for that Reason he would do me Justice in the *British Apollo*: So that as Mr. Smith has now acted the Part of a Gentleman, (by expunging those undeserv'd Reflections he formerly gave me in the *British Apollo*) I have no further Quarrel with him save only to re-answer all the Questions he has yet publish'd, for as I never stole any Man's Thought or Project in my whole Life, (for I think it as honest to pick his Pocket) so I'll suffer no Man to interlope either with my *Question-Project*, my *Phœnix-Project*, my *Paradox-Project*, my *Post-Project*, or any other Project of mine, without counterminating the Interloper, for this I take to be just and honourable, as 'tis doing Right to my self and Projects, which I have Need enough to secure, for my *Phœnix-Project* was lately invaded under the Title of *Bibliotheca curiosa*. My Essay entitl'd *The Hazard of a Death-Bed-Repentance* has been pyrated in London, Oxford and Cambridge, to the Number of an Hundred Thousand. My *Sayr on K. WILLIAM* has been pyrated Three Times, my *Diary Six*, my *Bloody Assizes* Six, and my Book entitl'd *Athenianism* (or Six Hundred Projects in Prose and Verse) being too large a Price for the common Buyers, the Pyrate Printers have already been nibbling at it in Penny Shams; I shall therefore publish in *Dunton's Oracle* all that remains of my Six Hundred Projects and call 'em *Athenianism*, or the *Project-Post*. So that the Reader will now find in my Octavo Book entitl'd *Athenianism*, or in my Quarto Paper entitl'd *Dunton's Oracle*, an entire Collection of all my Projects, from my Birth to my Death, which (including my *Post-Project*) is very near Four Thousand.

Having given a general and particular Account of my *Post-Project*, characteriz'd those Twelve ingenious Gentlemen whose *Lucubrations* will recommend it, shewn what *Athenian News* will be Weekly sent to *Dunton's Oracle* by the General and Penny-Post, and told you how much I despise all my soure, prejudic'd, undeserv'd Enemies, I shall now (in the last Place) conclude my *Athenian Preface* with a bold and daring Defiance to that Bright and First-rate Author who condescends so low as to call himself— *The TATLER*— i. e. to convince my generous Friends (the Weekly Readers of *Dunton's Oracle*) that I am arm'd Cap-a-pee with all Weapons fit to guard my Three Thousand Posts thro' an Army of Criticks, I do here (by Order of the whole *Athenian Society*) propose an honourable Challenge to that truly ingenious Gentleman the Immortal Bickerstaff, to write either *pro* or *con* upon all disputable Points. *Alexander* at the *Olympick Games* would wrestle with none but Monarchs, and 'tis beneath a Member of *Athens* to engage in a *Polemick Duel* with a less celebrated Writer than famous *ISAAC*; if therefore he accepts this Challenge the World will soon see whether fine Language or close Arguing will Tattle loudest; or if he declines a litteral War, as a Thing beneath his Fame and Gravity, (as he is Censor of Great Britain) he does *Dunton's Oracle* no small Honour, for all will say, (except it be a soure, prejudic'd Coxcomb) if he does not accept of so fair a Challenge, he only Tattles to please the Ladies, for sure I am nothing could be more Manly, or more amusing, than a *Litteral War*, (or a writing *pro* and *con* on all disputable Points) for there have been some Philosophers who have affirm'd all

Things equally disputable, and that the Difference only lies in the Advantage of well managing the Argument. Indeed it appears to me that there are many Things in most Sciences disputable enough, which if brought to a just and happy Issue would bid fair for the most considerable Advance-ment that has been made in Learning these many Years. However, that no Critick may take this *Challenge* for mere Rattle and Bounce, I'll make the first Pass, by asking our Conjuring Squire this puzzling Question, *What was the Reason why the Papists have corrupted the Hebrew Text, Gen. 3. 15. putting נָתַן for נָתַת and by whom was this done, and upon what Occasion?*

Mr. Bickerstaff, I shall further add, In reading upon that known Topick *Liberum arbitrium*, I meet with a double Difficulty, viz. 1. How, upon Supposition God certainly foreknows humane Actions, Man can be free? 2. How, supposing humane Actions are free, God certainly foreknows them? which if you reconcile (as I doubt not but you can) you will oblige greatly the *Athenian Society*, as well as convince all ingenious Querists how much you deserve that Tatling Fame you have been labouring for in your Weekly Paper: But if you neither will, or can answer those Questions I have propos'd, you must pardon me, famous *Isaac*, if you see 'em all answer'd in *Dunton's Oracle* under the Title of *Bickerstaff's Post*, or the Challenge unanswer'd; and what my self and *Athenian Brethren* advance in the Solution of these Doubts we'll defend (against learned *Isaac* and all his Adherents) to the last Drop of Ink: But as we dare not suppose that any of these Questions are too nice or curious for your matchless Wit to resolve, we'll expect to see an Answer to 'em in the first *Tatler* you publish after your perusing of this Challenge, which that you may be sure to read, is sent to you by honest *Morpheus*.

Learned Sir, If you think Good to accept of this Friendly Challenge, before we propose any more Subjects something shall be said (by the whole *Athenian Society*) of your shining Character and high Office, as Censor of Great Britain, towards rendering this litteral War the more just and honourable.

I should also re-mind you that some Civilities must pass between Esq; Bickerstaff and my *Athenian Brethren* towards introducing a better Acquaintance before we proceed to the main Challenges, for many Readers of great Candour and Judgment being endu'd with a mighty timorous Constitution, will never enter upon the reading of a publick Challenge (the Word Challenge sounds so frightful) without the utmost Circumspetion, lest in every Line some fly Thing should be lurking to circumvent their Judgments. Now, Sir, I am willing to do all I can towards easing their Minds of such Jealousies, and therefore assure those faint-hearted Gentlemen, that they may boldly and safely venture thro' every Challenge without the least Harm to their Intellectus; the oily Danger to be apprehended is, that by too great Precipitancy the many Graces of Composition (that will be always found in Esq; Bickerstaff's Writings) may escape Notice, much Watchfulness and Advertency of Thought being necessary to discern them all as they go on, where they are strew'd so thick in their Way, for, Sir, who you should cloath your Challenges (as you do your *Tatlers*) in the most proper and pellucid Dress, yet the Beauties of them will be too fine to be easily distinguish'd at first View, as they'll be too dazzling to be long contemplated, all you write being either wonderfully sublime, or vastly profound, but generally bold, which shew's how mighty a Capacity is requir'd to comprehend your Lucubrations, and how bold and daring the Attempt is, to make a Pass at the deservedly famous *Tatler*: However,

ibidem

The DEDICATION.

these Challenges are not design'd to trepan any inadvertent Reader, nor have they any Design upon him but what is purely for his own Good and our own Diversion.

Reader, These Three Questions are sent to the *Tatler* as— *A Trial of Skill*, (or honourable Challenge) and if he accepts of it if I refuse any learned Challenge he sends to me, (according to the Practice of our modern Duellists) let him post me up for a Coward.

*What tho' I miss my Blow, yet I aim high,
And to dare something is some Victory.*— Dryden.

And therefore, as my first Challenge is to *dare* the mighty *Tatler* to puzzle *Athens* with nice Questions, so my second will be *A Challenge upon all disputable Things*, which Challenges (if accepted) will be continu'd Weekly by the whole *Athenian Society*; which as it consists of Twelve Gentlemen, all Masters in their several Faculties, the *Illustrious Bickerstaff* can have no Pretence (save the Fear of ecclipping the Fame he has got by his Weekly *Tatlers*) not to accept such a friendly and honourable Challenge.

And now, Sir *Momus*, if all this Coft and Garniture won't recommend *Dunton's Posts* to thy Weekly Reading, thou art a stupid, spiteful *I know what*, and haft no Taste of *Novelty*, *Wit*, or *Manners*; but now I think on't 'tis a *Tattling Age* we live in, and perhaps *Dunton's Oracle* does not trifl enough to please a *vain*, *soure*, *humoursome Age*; however, I now send this *First Volume* abroad as a *true Mirror of the World*, as well as a new Lookinglass to represent my own private Thoughts and Actions, for tho' I am now but in the 48th Year of my Age, yet perhaps in this small Span (or little Epitome of Life) you may read more *Errors* and *Mistakes* than in his whose Years are written in Folio, (for every Man to his Trade) and hath out-liv'd Fourscore, but I hope God's Mercy will forgive the one and thy Ingenuity pardon the other.

However, my Three Thousand Posts shall now gallop into the wide World, and whether it shall find Entertainment I know not, perhaps it may light into some Lady's Lap, and have so much Honour as to possess the Place of her *little Dog*, or rather *Tatler*; (for the most in-

genious Lady I know in the World sent me Word b
Yesterday, that *Dunton's Oracles* were now her *TATLER*
(but that I know was a Complement) but let her bew
how she handles it, for if she be not virtuous it
bite her.

I shall only add, to my Three Thousand Posts I int
to annex

A Farewel to Printing,

In some serious Thoughts on those Words of *Solom*
Of making many Books there is no End, and much Study i
Weariness of the Flesh; and after giving this last Fare
to *Athens*, I shall trouble the World with no more *Oracle*
for, having printed Seven Hundred Books written by
other Persons, finish'd Six Hundred Projects with my
own Hand, (which I entitle *Athenianism*) and after the
mounted Three Thousand Posts, 'twill be full Time to
take my Leave of this Life and World.

Sir Critick, if you look for any thing more *particular*
at present, I will not gratify you one Syllable furthe
tho' every Man of you would engage to take 200
of *Dunton's Posts* every *Tuesday* and *Saturday* for the
Twelve Month, and so I bid you farewel 'till I meet you
in the Second Volume of *Dunton's Oracle*; in the me
Time, drinck wholesome Wine, and pray that I may do
too, or else you may happen to lose your *Weekly Drudge*
Keep your Heads warm and your Feet dry, beware
Chilblains on your Toes and Maggots in your Brain
kiss your own Wives, and get your own Children, tho'
it be a Thing never so much out of Fashion; and, to
conclude, tipple Three Quarts of *Tunbridge Waters* ever
Morning, as I do, (in the Month of *August*) and you
never die as long as you can see

Your *Athenian Friend*,

And *Weekly Oracle*, (can't please ye)

JOHN DUNTON

An Alphabetical TABLE of the several Posts, Questions, Novelties, Poems, and Characters, inserted in this First Volume of Dunton's Oracle.

A

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B

Bed-Post. N. 17.— The Twinkling of a Bed-staff explain'd. N. 17.— *Billet Deux* sent to *Dunton* by a Citizen's Wife, with his Answer to it. N. 10.— Body, is it the Cause of sinful Inclinations? N. 18.— Are all Bodies endu'd with Sense, as some Philosophers affirm? N. 26.— *British Apollo*, what particular Humour is there in that Title? N. 1.— Is there any Person besides *Smith* concern'd in writing that foolish Paper? N. 6.— How large is the Province that belongs to it? N. 7.— *British Apollo* address'd to in these Words, *And you shall be my God*. Are such Words tolerable in a Christian Nation? N. 9.

C

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the Beggars he heal'd? N. 24.— Why did he heal but one deaf Man? N. 28.— Why did he weep for *Lazarus* and not for *John Baptist*? N. 19.— Why did he sit while he preach'd to the Multitude? N. 12.— How many Times did he appear to his Disciples after his Resurrection? N. 17.

D

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The following POSTS will be all inserted in the Second Volume of Dunton's Oracle; Viz.

1. *THE Royal-Post*, or a Panegyrick on the present Administration, both in Church and State.
2. The *Healing-Post*, or an Expedient for a general Conformity.
3. The *Sick-Post*, or diverting Physick for every Disease incident to the Soul and Body.
4. *The Poet in Love*, or the *Courting-Post*, being a Satyr on his first Mistress.
5. *The Lady's Play-fellow*, or the *Lap-Dog-Post*, being a Funeral Oration upon *Jewel*, late Lap-Dog to Madam —————
6. The *Oglug-Post*, or News for the Batchelors.
7. The *Vicar of Bray*, or the *Turn-coat-Post*.
8. The *A, B, C, D-Post*, or Numb.
9. The *Proverbial-Post*, or a Poetical Descant upon English Proverbs, a Work never attempted before in Verse.
10. The *Leg-Post*, or a Woman's Face and Breast compar'd with her Foot.
11. The *Fragrant-Post*, or Parliament of Flowers.
12. The *Aged-Post*, or Dunton's Correspondence with his spiritual Guide upon such nice, secret, and uncommon Cases as have occurr'd to him in a Life of near Fourscore Years.
13. The *Sign Post*, dedicated to *John Dunton*, Esq; Post-Master General of Great Britain.
14. *Moderation on Horseback*, or the *Charitable-Post*, blowing his Horn to all Parties.
15. The *Pillory*, or *Peking-Post*.
16. The *Convocation-Post*, or the Assembly of Architects.
17. The *Sibil-Post*, or *Ideal Kingdom*, continu'd, being the Colony of dull Fancy.
18. The *Mill-Post*.
19. The *Know-Post*, or the Picture of a Critick.
20. The *Winged-Post*, or the great Council of Birds.
21. The *Reverend-Post*, or every Man his own Parson.
22. The *Railor*, or *Travelling-Post*, being a comick Ramble into the World, and out on't, and in

again, and then round it.

23. The *Catholick-Post*, or News from *Rome*.
24. The *Dead-Post*, or a strange History of such as have recover'd after they were actually hang'd, with their several Relations what Death is.
25. The *White Sheet*, or the *Pennance-Post*, being the publick Confession of a Fornicator who stood in a white Sheet in St. switkin's Church about Sixty Years ago.
26. *Ibaeton*, or the *Sun-Post*.
27. The *Post-script*, or the After Thought.
28. The *Red-letter Saint*, or the *Canonizing-Post*, occasion'd by the Pope's Promise to canonize Pope *Pius V.* and Five other new Saints, next Easter.
29. *Stormy Weather*, or the *Amusing-Post*.
30. The *Lame-Post*, or a Review of miraculous Events, from *Adam* down to the present Year, the first remarkable being the Life of an old Woman (now living in *London*) who gives the History of near 130 Years from her own Memory.
31. *Death-Bed-Charity*, or *Alms and no Alms*, being a Post from St. *Albans*, giving an odd Account of the Life, Death, and Funeral of that scraping and malicious Wretch, Madam *Jane Nickolas*.
32. The *Devil's Chappel*, or the *Play-house-Post*.
33. The *Lost Rib restor'd*, or the *Conjugal Post*, proving the Relation between Man and Wife is not dissolv'd by Death, a Notion wholly new.

* * These, with great Variety of other Novelties, shall all come into the Second Volume of Dunton's Oracle. Then judge Reader, if the First and Second Volume of Dunton's Oracle contain such great Variety of new Posts, what a vast Variety of Novelties will be contain'd in Three Thousand Posts!

Twelve BOOKS newly publish'd; Viz.

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O R,

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Tuesday March the 7th, 1710.— The Subjett this Day is— Dunton's Post, or a Dying Farewel to this Life and World; in which the undisguis'd Sentiments of a Soul standing on the Borders of Eternity are faithfully represented.— By John Dunton.

Also, a Letter to the Interloper, or British Apollo, proving that Man of the brightest Parts (as he call'd himself in his first Billing, or rather Hawking for Quarterly Customers) a dull, ignorant, false and impertinent Scribler, with several Reasons, shewing the Necessity and Justice of re-answering all the Questions he has yet publish'd.

We all are seiz'd with the Athenian Itch,
News and new things do the whole World bewitch.— Dr. Wild.

Dunton's Post, or a Dying Farewel to this Life and World.

Hoc quotidiè meditare, ut possis aequo animo vitam relinquere: quam mulii sic compleantur & tenent, quomodo qui à Torrente rapiuntur spinas & aspera. Senec. Ep. 4. Et quid babes propter quod expèctes? Voluptates ipsas qua te morantur ac retinent consumisti: nulla tibi nova est, nulla non jam odiosa ipsa satiata. Quis sit Vini, quis Mulsi sapor, scis? Nihil interest centum per Vesicam tuam an mille Amphoræ transeant?— Atqui bac sunt, à quibus invitus divelleris? Senec. Ep. 78.

Parents are naturally, and sometimes ridiculously, fond of their own Offspring; and we find that Authors have generally the same Kindness for their Intellectual Posterity. The Humour, as I take it, has more to be said for it in the latter than the former. Parents can give us no Account how their Child came to be of such a Complexion and Shape; nor can they say we contriv'd it so; they don't, designingly, mix and qualify the Fluids, nor provide Meanders for 'em thro' the Solids: They don't, understandingly, dispose and lay all the Threads of the Nervous Net-work, the little Eye-balls are strange Mysteries to 'em; they can't assure us of which Sex it may prove, or whether it mayn't want a Leg or an Arm. How little therefore can they claim as their own Share and Province in the whole!— On the other Hand, an Author has a clearer Insight into his Workmanship; he lays all the

Ideal Rudiments, digests and fashions them; by the Direction of his Understanding and the Vote of his Will he invests the rude Mass with Form and Beauty, composes the Features and adjusts the Proportions. Thus, tho' he's the Master of his Work, and entitl'd to something more than the Fee-simple of his own Creation, yet 'tis at the Peril of his Reputation if he speaks one good Word for it. Upon this Principle the World won't look upon me as impartial enough to do any small Office of that Kind for the following Performance. Shou'd I begin to declaim upon the Subject of my own Insufficiency, not a Reader but wou'd give me Credit. However, none of these things move me, and my Heart at length is become so mortified to this Life and World, that it will no more beat Time with the Affairs of 'em. I had rather be turn'd into a second Niobe, a Statue of weeping Marble, to lament the Follies of

of dying Creatures, in being impos'd upon by the Pageantry and Shew of the Wilderness, than, any more, to make one among the devoted Admirers. It is high Time for me, at least, to reef my Sails, I can make Land in the other World, and my own little Breath with the Tide of Life will serve well enough to put me gently ashore, tho' not one Gale of Honour or Applause be stirring. Not that I have any Heart to linger in my Passage, but I wou'd not be thrown with Violence, and shipwreck'd upon the Coast. If the Hebrew Pilgrims, under all their Disadvantages, when Life and Immortality were wrapt up in Darkness, cou'd climb to the Top of the Promises and take believing Views of the Heavenly Country, and if their Prospects of it cou'd entertain so well, that *this World* cou'd please no more, *Heb. 11.* it may, with greater Reason, be expected that Faith, being the intellectual Substance of things hoped for, and the clear, unquestion'd Evidence of things unseen, shou'd procure me an absolute, entire Victory over the *same World*, especially seeing the great Prophet has taken off the Shades, and set Life and Immortality in open Day. Nor, does Revelation alone set me thus upon the Borders of another World, but this dying Life has brought me within a few Pulses off it. Indeed this contracted Life-time won't admit that any Mortal shou'd say, *I am a great way off the future World*; and if so, with how little Reason can I imagine it will be long before I must quit the Stage and draw back the Scenes? My Lamp is not supply'd with *everlasting Oil*, but begins already to wink and burn within the Socket. I admire the Force and Beauty of that one Sentence in *Senec. Lib. 3. de Ira. Cap. 45.* *Dum respicimus versamusq; nos, Immortalitas aderit.* Men have not the Leisure to look behind and turn 'emselves but Immortality will be upon 'em.

The Reader perhaps may think it reasonable the *Fifth Act* of my *Drama* shou'd have concluded with the History of my *Life and Errors*, and that I shou'd have come upon the Stage no more. On the other Hand I wou'd offer for myself, that this Performance comes only in the Room and Character of an *Epilogue* just before the *Curtain drops* and closes up both the *Action* and the *Scenes*. Besides, we are not uneasy when troublesome Company takes *Leave* and walks off.

I have a long Time very passionately desir'd the Leisure to state Matters and to balance Accounts with this *Life and world*: But the Business has been so put off, that I can properly do it now under no *other Form* than of a *solemn Farewell*; and what I have found of Advantage in my own Case, I'm in Hopes, may be of Use to others. I have not been casting about for Medicines to *preserve* this dying Life, which wou'd be a most hopeless Design.

*In vain the Tree of Life we boast,
Since Paradise, in which it grew, is lost.* — Norris's Miscel.

All the World about me is in Motion, the *Fashion of it* is passing away, and I'm no more than a Bubble upon the hasty Stream.

Provebitur portu, terraq; urbesq; recedunt. — Virgil *Aen. 3. 73.*

I am journeying Day and Night towards an eternal World, and can no more stop my self than one who slides down a steep Place upon Ice; nor am I out of Humour that it shou'd be so. I am only preparing a Cordial to keep up my Spirits, that I may die with the more Courage and the better Heart. 'Tis often taken for a mighty Help,

to speak out and to ease one's Mind, and I'm resolv'd, once for all, to draw forth my naked, undisguis'd Thoughts, in a small Compas, that I may not be tedious to the Reader, but especially to my self. Not that I perceive in my self any Overflowings of the Gall, or any Fits of Spleen, for I freely own it as my settled Judgment, that this *Life and World* have Aptitude enough in 'em to serve the Ends they were design'd for, and we can reasonably expect no more. But I know no Irreligion in it to beat down the Price, and lessen the Value of present Entertainments to its just Proportion, out of a prevailing governing Respect to the future *Life and World*. — My Design is to take a *dying Farewel* of whatever I have met with that is remarkable and extraordinary in the present State, and this, in order to render my Remove the easier. I wou'd not be torn out of the World with the least Reluctancy, but wou'd fall like ripe Fruit, with a consenting resigned Will, and therefore to take *Leave* before-hand may bring the Matter into some Forwardness. I shall treat every *Farewel* with the same Solemnity and Seriousness, as if I never expected to converse with the thing it self any more.

It may readily be objected here, *What Occasion for all this Ceremony? Can't you leave the World without whining and canting over it? It never look'd upon you to be so considerable as to expect you should speech it thus at parting, and wou'd not be offended tho' you went off without turning about and paying your last Honours to it.*

Pray not so fast. I design as little Ceremony as you please, and as for *whining and canting*, tho' I know 'tis difficult for a dying Man to speak in the same Key and Tone as when he found himself at Ease, yet, were it possible, I wou'd die without a Sigh or Groan. *Si ingemueris salvaberis*, if thou dost but groan thou shalt be sav'd, is no Article of my *Creed*, whatever some of the *Latin Fathers* might think of it. Again, *that the World never look'd upon me as considerable*, is neither News to me, nor does it mortify me much. Had the World treated me with greater Kindness and Regard, it might have got a dangerous Dominion over me. When I reflect how great Odds there were once that I shou'd have been hamper'd in its Toils, that my Heart and Will shou'd have been taken Prisoners, I congratulate my present Liberty, and bless the great Author of it. The Thoughts which the World has entertain'd of me are not to be the Measure of the Judgment which I pass either upon my self or it, and I claim a little Freedom upon this Head. Whether the World expected this *last Regard* from me, concerns me very little; I am not to be govern'd by the *Expectations* of others.

As for the *Novelty* of the Manner of writing, which is attempted in the *Farewells*, I ascribe it wholly to the peculiar Oddness of my *Genius*, and the Liberty in thinking, of which I know none have any License to deprive me of. 'Tis little enough, if, once in Life Time, I be suffer'd to abound in my own Sense, suppose there be nothing contrary to Religion and good Manners. — *Jacobus Acontius*, a most worthy Person, offended at the evil Disposition of our *Scribbling Age*, wish'd that it might be provided that none shou'd write and publish any thing, unless it were some *new Thing*, which shou'd both be of his own *Observation*, and might make for the Glory of God, or the Advancement of Learning. I can't but think this a very pious and reasonable Wish, for I don't know a better Way to cure a *restless Curiosity*, than to pursue it as far as *Scripture* and *Reason* will warrant us. For my own Share, I must own I am seiz'd with the *Armenian Itch*, to as high a Degree as ever any Man was, and am neither ignorant

rant of my swerving therein from the common Opinions of the Times, nor yet insensible of the many Censures I shall incur from some by reason thereof, but the Scope of Scriptures and Light of Reason is the Ground of my Belief, and shall be my only Rule in composing of *Dunton's Farewels*; and being back'd with two such Authorities, I may venture at any Discovery to which they shall direct me.

The Design of the *whole* is expressly to promote the *Divine Life* in my self and others, to keep fresh in Memory the great *World* that lies on the other Side of the *Grave* and *Death*, by disengaging Heart and Will from *this*; to represent in most moving Terms the Sentiments of the Soul that is just upon changing *World* for *World*. 'Tis certainly so, *Death* seems as *strange* and *awful*, as if no one had trod the dark *Passage* before *us*. I know no one that ever *designedly* writ upon the *Subject*, or that has so much as attempted a particular View of the alter'd Thoughts, which a departing Spirit entertains and forms of this *Life* and *World*. A few Hints, and no more, are generally flash'd in a *Funeral Discourse*, but those Hints, as they are occasionally rais'd, so they are occasionally laid again. I am sorry to observe those *Funeral Rites* to degenerate so much into meer Custom, and to become little more than a handsome Way of shutting up the Scenes of *Life*. The *Parson*, generally, rings you the same *Changes* upon all Emergencies of that Kind, which has done no little Service to the Cause of *Atheism*, *Irreligion*, and the *Dissolution* of *Manners*; as if one Day we shou'd introduce the *Creed*, as well as the Practice of the *Heathens*.

— *Animamq; sepulcro
Condimus, & magna supremum voce ciemus.*

Not that I wou'd argue from the *Abuse* to the total Neglect of *Funeral Discourses*.

I am enclin'd, upon second Thoughts, to suffer the Peculiarities in the Notion of some of these *Farewels* to pass without any farther Defence, being very little concern'd whether others, in all Points, think and speak as I do. I have taken Care the *Expression* shou'd be as little *ambiguous* as possible. I place but little of my Religion in meer *Language* and beaten *Terms*, but I have with the utmost Care made them as expressive of my own *Images* and the *Essences* of things, as I was capable; designing a particular *Farewell to human Language*, with which I have been strangely bubbld and hinder'd in my Searches after *naked Truth*.

As to the *Poetry* that is interspers'd, I have no Design by it to chime my Reader into *Humour*, and to fill up the Vacancies of *Sense* with *Musick*; only when my Heats were too strong and flaming for the heavier *Genius of Prose*, I have made Choice of the *other* as a Gratification of my own *Humour*, and not that I shou'd tire, like a *Pack-horse*, without my *Bells*.

I have no preliminary *Conditions* to impose upon my Reader, but give my free Consent that he shou'd peruse the *Farewels* with the same Liberty I have writ them. That living Religion may be advanc'd by 'em, and the true Knowledge of this *Life* and *State*, is both the Design and Prayer of the dying Author — *John Dunton*.

Thus, Reader, I have finish'd my *General Preface* to my *Dying Farewels to this Life and World*: I shall in my next *Post* proceed to *particular Farewels*, designing (for the sake of *Variety*) in every one of my *Three Thousand Posts*, to bring in a short *Farewell*; where, tho' the several *Farewels* will be *Three Thousand*, I consult neither Author or Friend in the whole Performance, the Design of *Dunton's Post* being to present the *World* with my own *naked Thoughts*, both on Persons and Things, in *Three Thousand distinct Farewels*; and whatever Treatment the rest of my *Posts* meet with, I hope *Dunton's Post* will meet with some kind Friends, not only as 'tis wholly *new*, but as 'tis my *last Farewell to this Life and World*, and writ with the same *Seriousness*, with as little *Art*, and as few *Quotations*, as if I were now breathing my last, in order to launch into an endless *Eternity*; not but I shall always acknowledge the *Assistance* I have from my learned Friends, but on this I have no *Dependance*: So that as *universal* as my *Project* is, the *labouring Oar* will be always mine; but more especially in *Dunton's Post* — *The Philosophick-Post* — *The Wicked-Post* — *The Casuistical-Post* — *The Post-Pidgeon* — *The Courting-Post* — *The Fighting-Post* — *The Travelling-Post* — *The Rhyming-Post* — *The Preaching-Post* — *The Merry-Post*, &c. — where I shall present the Reader with nothing but what is *new*, and challenge even my avow'd *Enemy*, the *British Apollo*, to find any thing in any of these *Eleven Posts* that he has ever read or seen before, which is more than he can say of any thing he speaks or writes; for the learned *Malamoris* assures me that "most of his *Answers* (in the *British Apollo*) are *copy'd from primed Books*: And with those Words *Dunton's Post* bids thee farewell 'till next *Saturday*, for hark! the *Casuistical-Post* blows his *Horn*, and I must now talk with my old Friends the *Querists*.

The Casuistical-Post, or Athenian Mercury, resolving all nice and curious Questions.

Having discover'd the *Rise*, *Design*, and *Novelty* of my *Athenian, or Question-Project*, in my *Book* lately publish'd, entitl'd *Athenianism, or Six Hundred Projects in Prose and Verse*, all I have further to say, by Way of *Preface* to my *Question-Project*, is only to acquaint the Reader that I design to continue this *Casuistical-Post*, or *Athenian Mercury*, in my *Weekly Paper*, and in the remaining *Volumes* that are to perfect *Dunton's Athenianism*, 'till I have compleated the *Question-Project* under the Title of *Dunton's Oracle*; and that none of my old Friends the *Querists* may be put to the needless Charge of buying the same *Questions* twice, I shall not only answer all the nice and curious *Questions* that are sent to me by the *ingenious* of either *Sex*, but shall re-answer all the valuable *Questions* I find in the *interloping Paper*, entitl'd *The British Apollo*, and in my *Post* entitl'd *The Whipping-Post*, or *War with the Authors*, (which I shall erect for the *Correction* of *M. Smith*, the present *Author* of the *British Apollo*) I shall not only shew the *Necessity* and *Justice* of proceeding in this *Method*, but also prove the *Interloper*, or *British Apollo*, a *dull, ignorant, false, and impertinent Scribler*: And seeing I design *Dunton's Oracle* for a *universal Directory* for any that labour under any *Seruple* whatever, I shall give an *impartial Answer* to whatever *Questions* are sent to me by either *Churchmen* or *Dissenters*; for as I lately told the *World*, "Moderation is the *Principle* I have *imbib'd* in my *Infancy*, 'tis that which has *bitber* supported me in the most *variable* and *tryng* *Times*, and which I hope shall accompany me to the *last*; and therefore I shall *neither* in my *Three Thousand Posts*, *Dying Farewels*, nor *Athenian Mercury*, write for any *particular Party*, but for the *Good of Mankind in general*; and the first *Question* I shall answer is one that was sent to me relating to the *British Apollo*, which is *this following*.

Quest,

Quest. Mr. Dunton, It has been warmly disputed over a Bottle, what particular Humour or Propriety there shou'd be in this Title, British Apollo. We desire your Thoughts upon it, which will be a very great Obligation to your humble Servants, &c.

Answ. The Humour of this Title is taken from the *Delphic Oracle*, dedicated to *Apollo*, where the *Devil*, under the Name of *Pytho*, deluded the World by pretending to resolve Difficulties, and predict Futurities. That Devil always made Use of some ignorant, common Woman, i. e. a Whore, and the *Vagina uterina* was the Organ, out of which he pronounc'd his Oracles, while she sat upon her *Tripos*. *Origen* in his 7th Book against *Celsus*, p. 339. makes very good Use of this abominable and notorious Practice, turning it into a strong Argument against the Deity of *Apollo*. *Ἔτιπε δὲ Θεὸς οὐ καὶ Εἰδὼν δούτας οὐταὶ οὐ περὶ Δελφοῖς Ἀπόλλων*, &c. If *Apollo* of *Delphi* were a God, as the Greeks imagine him to be, whom shou'd he rather chuse to deliver his Oracles by than some wise Man? Or if such a one cou'd not be met with, he shou'd at least have made Choice of one who was upon the Road to Wisdom. How came it about that he did not prefer the Ministry of a Man to that of a Woman? Or if he must have a Woman, wou'd nothing please him but the *Pr—v—ties*? I appeal to all such Readers as are capable to judge of the *Original*, as to the Faithfulness of this Translation. No Wonder *Apollo* shou'd be liquorish and rank in his Expressions. This Title must be very improper for a Paper that pretends to resolve all doubtful Cases in Divinity. I shan't aggravate this Matter at present, tho' Materials are at Hand. However, the calling these Things to Mind made me change the Title of my Weekly Paper from *Dunton's Apollo* to *Dunton's Oracle*, and I find this necessary Change of my Title agrees with the Sentiments of my noble and ingenious Friend *Malamoris*, for in his Letter to me he is pleas'd to ask, *Whether it wou'd not be most for Mr. Dunton's Advantage, to give his Paper the Title of Dunton's Oracle, rather than Dunton's Apollo, since an Oracle that was projected and writ by him, hath been so famous already; and which will be a more distinguishing Title, since at the present there is a foolish interloping Paper that bears the Name of APOLLO?*

Q. Mr. Dunton, understanding you design to answer anew all the valuable Questions in the interloping *Apollo*, as well as all nice and curious Questions sent to you, I shall now send all my Questions to the Athenian *Mercury*; and the first puzzling Question I wou'd ask you is, *Whether the Science of natural Philosophy, or any other Science, will remain in Heaven?*

A. The Conclusions that (in this weak and imperfect State) have been made from some few Principles, in every Art and Science, are almost infinite: Who can number the Conclusions that have been made from the Principles of *Natural Philosophy*, *Metaphysics*, and *Geometry*? How many vast, and almost numberless Volumes, have been written concerning them? And when will they make an End? Those Sciences have been study'd and polish'd by Heathens and Christians, for well nigh Two Thousand Years; and yet every new Writer pretends to say something that was not said before; and to add to the Advancement, Encrease and Perfection of them.

Some think the Inferences and Deductions that are made from the Principles of *Geometry* alone, may be capable of everlasting Encrease and Augmentation; and truly, he that considers the numberless Number of Propositions that are in the several Branches and Dependencies of that Sci-

ence, will find no great Difficulty in believing it. How numerous are the Propositions that are to be found in *Geometry*, properly and strictly taken, in *Astronomy*, *Algebra*, *Musick*, *Opticks*, *Dialing*, and the Art of *Navigation*? And how few and simple are the Principles from which they have been infer'd and deduc'd? What daily Additions and Increases are made to them by learned Men? Every Day, almost, Books are publish'd and printed, in which something is added towards the Perfection of those Sciences.

And as Numbers may be perpetually, and to all Durations, encreas'd by Addition, so I am very much enclin'd to believe that the Propositions in *Mathematicks* neither are, or ever will be so numerous, but that they may be encreas'd: And those that are skill'd in them, and do observe how they generate each other, will (I am perswaded) think as I do, and modestly affirm, that it may be continu'd to Infinity.

In the mean Time, I will not affirm that the Study of *Geometry* will be any Part of the Employment of the blessed. Perhaps there will be no Use of it, or Occasion for it there. Some Arts and Sciences will expire with our Dissolution, because the Use of them will then determine. All the Mechanick Artifices, by which Men support themselves and their Families, will receive their Period with our Lives: The Arts of *plowing* and *sowing*, of *building* and *planting*, of passing the Seas, and navigating into foreign Countries, will end with this Life, because there will be no Use of them in the other. And, perhaps, so it may be with all Mathematical Learning and Science.

But if the Principles of one single Science may be productive of almost infinite Conclusions, much more may the Principles of all Sciences: And that some Science will be of Use in the other State, few doubt or deny. The Science of *Natural Philosophy* will remain there: The blessed shall understand the Nature of their own Bodies, and all others that they converse withal, and are presented to their View. How can they give God the Praise of them, if they do not know them, nor cannot penetrate the Abysses of them? And how far this Knowledge may extend who is able to divine?

Besides, it is not improbable that the future World may furnish many Species and Kinds of Bodies to our Contemplation. The Earth, and Sea, and Air, have their peculiar Kinds of Corporeal Essences; yea, every Climate, almost, hath something peculiar to it self: And what hinders but that the highest Heavens may have Multitudes of Peculiarities, the like whereunto our Eyes have never seen, nor our Ears heard? Yea, give me Leave to say, that I am much past Doubt of it. Surely, that blessed State will present many glorious Objects and excellent Beings to our View, and our Knowledge will be much encreas'd and enlarg'd thereby.

Moreover, we cannot doubt but the Science of *Metaphysics* will also be continu'd there. The most glorious of all reasonable Creatures are of spiritual and metaphysical Nature: Such are all the holy Angels and blessed Saints. Whether there be any thing material in their Constitution, whether they be embody'd in pure and *Aetherial* Vehicles, I will not here dispute, but all do grant that there is something in their Essence that is spiritual, and, without all Doubt, the blessed will have some Knowledge of it.

The Letter to the Interloper, and several curious Questions, for want of Room, shall be reserv'd for Tuesday's Oracle.

In my next Oracle expect the Mob-Post, or the secret History of Sacheverelism, and a dying Farewel to Personal Prejudices.